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Message Text

SECRET

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21
ACTION SS-30

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /031 W
---------- 082306
R 300636Z MAY 74
FM AMEMBASSY TAIPEI
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1911
SECDEF WASHDC
JCS WASHDC
CINCPAC
COMUSTDC
CHMAAG TAIPEI TAIWAN

S E C R E T TAIPEI 3375

EXDIS - SPECATT FOR MILITARY ADDRESSEES

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MASS, PFOR, MILI, TW
SUBJECT: MAAG PERSONNEL STRENGTH TAIWAN

REF: A. TAIPEI 1816; B. JCS 042213Z MARCH 74

1. AFTER CAREFUL REVIEW I HAVE CONCLUDED THAT MAAG/ROC WILL BE ABLE TO FUNCTION ADEQUATELY WITHIN 50MAN US PERSONNEL CEILING SET BY JCS (REF B) AND THAT PHASE DOWN CAN BE MANAGED WITHOUT UNDUE POLITICAL DAMAGE. IT IS IMPORTANT, HOWEVER, THAT DRAWDOWN BE GRADUAL AND NOT BE COMPLETED UNTIL END OF FY 75. ANY REDUCTION OF FY76 SHOULD BE MINIMAL TO RPOVIDE A PERIOD OF STABILITY WHILE ROC IS PROGRESSING WITH MAJOR DEFENSE MODERNIZATION PROGRAMS.

2. CHIEF MAAG HAS REITERATED TO ME THAT HE CAN CARRY OUT HIS ASSIGNED MISSION WITHIN JCS CEILING, AND HE HAS PRESENTED SENSIBLE PLAN FOR DOING SO. POLITICAL EFFECTS ARE HARDER TO ASSESS BUT I AM REASONABLY CONFIDENT THERE WILL BE NO MAJOR FALLOUT. CCK, MILITARY OFFICERS, AND EVEN SOME CIVILIAN OFFICIALS ARE BOTHERED BY A SHRINKING MAAG. THEY ARE PROBABLY LESS CONCERNED ABOUT PRACTICAL EFFECTS THAN BY SYMBOLISM, ESPECIALLY IN PERIOD OF
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SUBSTANTIAL DRAWDOWN OF OTHER US FORCES ON TAIWAN.

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NEVERTHELESS THEY HAVE CHOSEN NOT TO COMPLAIN, IN PART BECAUSE THEY UNDERSTAND REDUCTIONS ARE WORLDWIDE PHENOMENON.

3. IN AMBASSADOR MCCONAUGHY'S LAST CONVERSATIONS WITH CCK HE NOTED THAT TAIWAN WOULD NOT ESCAPE HEAVY CUTS TAKING PLACE IN MAAGS' THROUGHOUT WORLD. HE INDICATED LOCAL CUTS WOULD BE GRADUAL AND WOULD STILL LEAVE MAAG AS AN IDENTIFIABLE ORGANIZATION ALONG WITH TDC. APART FROM ASKING FOR MINOR CLARIFICATIONS AT TIME, CCK HAS NEVER RETURNED TO SUBJECT (EVEN THOUGH WE ARE REASONABLY CERTAIN HE IS UNOFFICIALLY AWARE OF 50-MAN CEILING). AS MAAG'S PHYSICAL PRESENCE BECOMES NOTICEABLY SMALLER, ROC MILITARY MAY BEGIN TO REGISTER GREATER UNHAPPINESS AND CCK MAY EVEN RAISE MATTER WITH ME. I BELIEVE, HOWEVER, IT WILL BE POSSIBLE TO KEEP THIS FROM BECOMING A SERIOUS ISSUE.

4. I WOULD LIKE TO DEFER RECOMMENDATIONS ON MAAG/TDC RELATIONSHIPS UNTIL I HAVE HAD A LONGER EXPOSURE TO TAIWAN SITUATION.
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